

23 May, 1911.]

IMPERIAL COUNCIL.

[1st Day.]

Sir JOSEPH WARD—*cont.*

that the tendency with all of us is to have a proportion of people with a tongue different to our own, drawn from other countries on account of the attractiveness of our countries for settlement purposes; and as the years go on none of us can tell what proportion it may be or to what extent it may minimise our desire to see that our countries are maintained as strong and as vigorous as they are now. I think that applies to all of us.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I understand you think that the character of the population should be an Imperial question.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I am not, of course, in any way reflecting upon any other nationalities outside our own, quite the contrary; but what I am trying to convey is this: that to-day, when we all are strong on the point of British territory, and have the great majority of the people in our countries British, what is now possible in the way of organization will, in 25 years from now, or even 10 years, be more difficult of accomplishment than it is to-day.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: But if I understand you aright you say that the country would be flooded by those outside people, and so become less British than it is to-day, and possessed of a different spirit.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: If a majority got into our countries it would be so.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I do not admit that conclusion at all; but I only wanted to understand your argument, and I understand it now.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: My opinion is that if a majority or a very large proportion of these foreign people get in, it will have a weakening tendency.

I was referring to the area, to the size, of the different oversea Dominions. I have already pointed out that we do not measure a country by its population, and I was pointing out the areas of Canada, South Africa, and Australia that are available for the purposes of settlement. Practically within a century the population of the United States of America, which has been drawn from all parts of the world, has grown to over 90 millions of people. Since 1848 it has increased by about 50 millions; and to-day the United States of America may in round figures be said to possess about 100 millions of people. Speaking in a general sense, but subject to the greater knowledge of the gentlemen who represent the other countries, I should say that the prospective possibilities of the Dominion of Canada for settlement purposes are not less than those of the United States of America, and that it also is capable of holding 100 millions of people in the future. To use the expressive words which I once saw published as having been spoken by Sir Wilfrid Laurier: "This is the Canadian century—the last one was the American century." In saying that, he was referring to the flow of immigration to the respective countries and to the benefits which naturally follow increased population. Now, I also say that Australia is capable of holding 100 millions of people. But considering its comparatively small population to-day it may be a great number of years before even the position that the great Dominion of Canada has attained to now is reached by Australia. Notwithstanding its huge areas and the possibilities of settlement in the future it must be some time before the population of the Commonwealth reaches 100 millions.

I believe, however, as the result of examination, and the result of contrast with other countries, that Australia is capable of holding 100 millions of people, and I think, too, I am right in saying that South Africa is as capable of holding 100 millions of people as either of the two other countries. I judge very largely upon a close analysis of information which I have regarding these countries, and I believe it is not an exaggerated view to take that those three Dominions to which I have just referred—the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of